



**Electric Cooperatives  
of Arkansas**

## **News Release**

### ***Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas members submit more than 18,000 comments to EPA***

*Nationwide effort nets more than 1 million comments*

**Little Rock, Ark.** — Dec. 2, 2014 — Electric cooperative members in Arkansas have submitted more than 18,000 comments to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in opposition to the agency's draft proposal to dramatically reduce carbon dioxide emissions from existing power plants within a few short years.

The deadline for comments was Dec. 1. The EPA will now begin the process of evaluating all the comments submitted as it works to develop the final rule due to be released in June of 2015.

"Electric cooperative members across America submitted more than 1 million comments to let the EPA know that they are concerned about the impacts on affordability and reliability that the proposed regulations would cause," said Duane Highley, president and chief executive officer of Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corporation, a Little Rock-based wholesale electricity supplier. "The Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas are committed to working with state and federal agencies to develop a better plan that would achieve a balance of affordability, reliability and a more realistic timeframe than the EPA's current proposal."

According to Highley, once a final EPA rule is issued in 2015, the Arkansas' electric cooperatives will work with the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) and the Arkansas Public Service Commission (APSC) to develop a state implementation plan that would then be submitted to the EPA for approval.

"The Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas advocate a plan that preserves our ability to provide reliable and affordable electric service to our members," he said. "That process would begin with EPA's adoption of a realistic timeline and achievable carbon dioxide reduction goals. EPA's proposed rule is not realistic and would, in fact, adversely impact reliable electric service and affordable rates. EPA's final rule must also include a baseline period that is representative of actual generation and emission levels from the state's electric generation plants. The use of a multi-year baseline would capture the natural yearly variations in supply, weather and other factors. A multi-year baseline period also would be consistent with how EPA expects states to demonstrate compliance under the proposed rule."

The Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas comprise 17 electric distribution cooperatives; Arkansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. (AECI), a Little Rock-based cooperative that provides services to the distribution cooperatives; and Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corp. (AECC), a generation and transmission cooperative. The distribution cooperatives provide electricity to approximately 500,000 homes, farms and businesses in Arkansas and surrounding states.

*For additional information, contact:*

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